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THE JOURNAL OF PHILOSOPHY

PERCEPTION, MEANING, AND THE SUBJECT-MATTER OF ART

I PROPOSE, in these pages, to examine the distinction that is drawn between the content and the form of a work of art—a distinction with which all are dissatisfied but no one, apparently, is ready to dispense. Commonly, it is given a psychological significance—for example, by Franz Boas: "It is essential to bear in mind the twofold source of artistic effect, the one based on form alone, the other on ideas associated with form."[1] This alludes to the ordinary classification of art objects as formal and representative; but the *principle* of classification is extraordinary. A composition is based on the repetition of a spiral motive, or on a scheme of interlocking lozenges, or on elements placed with exact symmetry on a rectangular field; in another there appears a mountain, a face, a tree. The first is called an abstract or pure design; in the second, called a representation, we find—I will not say a *familiar* form because the abstract figure is perhaps familiar in its way—the form which is characteristic of a familiar sort of object or situation lying about us in the world. Now comparing the rug on the floor with the picture on the wall, we are instantly aware of a difference which would seem to be *anterior* in the order of obviousness to the categories of psychology; and a child, we might suppose, who should be asked to explain the difference between these objects would wonder why they should be expected to be *alike*—so great is the disparity of visible form. Yet Boas has taken no account of this disparity. He finds that the examples are in one respect similar, since each presents a certain form to the eye, but that there is added something to the second in the nature of a contribution which it extorts from the mind; and it is implied that if this increment were somehow obviated, there would remain no fundamental difference to be marked. This implication is made explicit, in an essay designed to establish the esthetic significance of subject-matter, by Professor Walter Abell:

> Were we to limit painting and sculpture to elements provided in complete form by vision, then color, line, shape, and size would be the only elements

[1] *Primitive Art*, p. 13.

available to them. . . . [Subject-matter] cannot be legitimately excluded unless we wish to limit ourselves to visual stimuli uninterpreted by *any* of their meanings, in which case we should have to restrict art to the sphere of geometrical pattern.[2]

If painting and sculpture, in short, were perfectly formal, they would be perfectly abstract.

Appreciation is an activity that runs its course within the psychological framework. The question must therefore arise, what functions or faculties does it call into play; and what, in particular, is the rôle of direct perception on the one hand and of meaning, association, or thought on the other? There has also existed a controversy, from an early time, between the *Form-aesthetiker*, as Fechner called them, and the *Inhaltsaesthetiker*, over the element of subject-matter in the arts. The singular feature of the analysis from which I have quoted is that it combines the two issues by assuming that subject-matter is imported through associative processes into the experience of art. It affirms the importance of the representative factor in art and, simultaneously, of the higher mental action in esthetic experience. (Modern formalism joins issue very squarely on this ground, rejecting the double thesis in a single breath.[3]) Originating within the limits of a psychology of consciousness, it tends to adopt an account of meaning in terms of sensory datum and associated image; but the same assumption has been couched in the terminology of behaviorism and in quasi-epistemological terms like "designation," "construction," and "reference."[4] It will not be material to my argument what theory of interpretation we may choose to endorse.

I shall argue that an all but complete analysis of "subject-matter" can be given by a *presentational* esthetic; and that we may, therefore, continue to identify the esthetic with the immediate without submitting to the reductions of formalism. It will be convenient to press this thesis in a one-sided fashion, leaving the necessary qualifications to the end.

I must give notice that I shall be unable to propose definitions that will satisfy *every* element in the complicated usage of our leading terms. "Form" we may here define with Santayana as "sensuous elements in combination."

[2] *Representation and Form*, pp. 97–98.

[3] "To appreciate a work of art we need bring with us nothing from life, no knowledge of its ideas and affairs . . . nothing but a sense of form and color and a knowledge of three-dimensional space." Clive Bell, *Art*, pp. 25–27.

[4] I number among English and American partisans of this view Santayana, Bosanquet, Dewey, Alexander, Ducasse, Parker, Morris, Barnes, Bowers, and others.

I

We have a picture in which the moon is seen shining through leaves upon figures in a garden. If associations can be said to contribute to the effect of this scene, they must be called upon to bring the absent into the present—to render certain ingredients available that are not directly given to sense. But the moon could not be one of these, because it is already included within the direct impression. Nor any of these leaves—for the same reason; and I believe that we can pronounce them *sere* or *fragile* with a certainty equal to that with which we can say that they are *yellow* or *symmetrical*. In fact, if I may say so, the whole picture is already in the picture: since there is no question of a response on our part to outlying extensions of the picture landscape, there can be no need that these extensions (which do not even exist) should be made known to us.

It will be said that there are no leaves in the picture and no moon, but a collection of shapes—a geometrical pattern. Now nothing that exists in two dimensions or in three is not a shape and a geometrical pattern; but it may be just as arbitrary as it is accurate to describe it so. A leaf is a geometrical, a botanical, a foliar, and finally a uniquely individualized pattern. But the point is otherwise well taken: there is of course no leaf in the picture but something that looks like a leaf—a leaf-like shape. (Not some *other* shape, be it noted, such as a triangle; nor does the moon reduce itself to a "yellow disk"; nor does the painting as a whole assume the slightest tendency to resemble a composition by Kandinsky.) Not to confuse the "shape" (that is, the sense-datum) with the object, I shall refer to the first, whenever necessary, in quotation marks—as, the "leaf," the "moon."

The inside and the other side, the physical dimensions—in a word, the substance—of the moon finds no place in the representation. Let us therefore turn to the moon itself, which we will imagine ourselves to be admiring. The same associations, be it admitted, which are demanded of us by *this* situation will be demanded by the other. (We must suppose, in the interest of our problem, that the sense-data are exactly alike in the two cases—a condition that is perhaps never fulfilled.) Now it is not essential to the present argument that associations be ruled out of *either* situation: we are concerned with the question of associations only in so far as that question is raised in a *special* form by the topic of artistic representation. Yet it does appear to be just the peculiarity of the esthetic outlook on nature that the normal processes of interpretation are in abeyance for its duration. To

admire a natural object is to contract one's interest to its appearance; or, conversely, we may say that the appearance, relinquishing its several sign functions, achieves an intrinsic importance; so that precisely that substance which is lacking in the imitation is ignored in the original, where it really exists. All this, to be sure, is more easily said than understood, for the *analysis* of the esthetic attitude is somewhat complicated. But a conception can be sound without being precise, and this is a conception upon which modern writers, with few exceptions, converge, saving their differences for the refinements. When they deal with the esthetic experience *in general*, they find nothing to distinguish it save the aspect of absorption in the immediate. But the subject-matter of *art*, as they insist, is drawn from nature. Do the forms, then, with which in nature we are said to traffic directly become symbolical and referential when they are translated into the experience of art?

The moon is said to be *represented* by a sense-datum, an impression. In the same sense, though less directly, it may be represented by a photograph or a drawing, for on such a figure we may base certain calculations concerning the moon. The function of representation in this sense, I suppose it granted, is utterly antagonistic to esthetic appreciation. There remains only the sense in which the picture of the moon may be said to represent, not the moon itself, but the original impression. But why should the picture need to *represent* the "moon" when *ex hypothesi* it *is* the "moon"? What would in that case account for the ability of the original to act on us as it does? The "moon" as it appears to us this evening is certainly not unique—we have seen the "same thing" before. Yet no one will say that the present impression represents, or recalls, a past impression, much less a painting. The scene being here and now laid out before us with all its elements, there is nothing which recollection is needed to supply. But the same condition is met by the representation. We can not, perhaps, explain why certain cloud formations, hovering before the moon, should affect us with a sense of mystery; but no special problem, surely, is created by the same form (still supposing that it were the same) when it appears in painting.

To treat with a representative is to aim at a principal; but the esthetic datum, artificial or natural, acts for itself alone, and our response is appropriate not to what the form may stand for but to what the form may *be*. Art, then, in its esthetic capacity, is not representation; and we shall continue to refer to "representations" by that name only in the way that a senator retains his title when he leaves his office. Works of art may indeed retain their *power* of representation in so

far as, being connected by a chain of events with various incidents or persons, they can form the basis of an inference respecting the latter. The so-called *iconic* emblem, such as a portrait, which bears a certified resemblance to an original, can tell us something about the appearance and character of that original. And this use to which the object lends itself has its familiar satisfactions, more renowned, perhaps, than those of beauty. A portrait of Erasmus possesses an interest which stems from the "subject," as we say, meaning the sitter; but if that interest could be said to contribute to the beauty of the picture, then its beauty would be subject to impairment, e.g., by documentary evidence, which might show that the portrait was spurious. Which is absurd.

Does it follow that we must ignore what indubitably is *in* the picture, an aspect of its form—the human countenance with its moral expression, its smile, the light in the eye? Must we speak only of color areas, volumes, the relationship of planes?

We have by no means exhausted the question of the dependence of appreciation upon past experience, for past experience may function in recognition as well as in interpretation and recall. The concept of recognition, however, is ambiguous. One is said to have recognized somebody in a crowd. This implies a conviction of that person's physical presence. The act of recognition, in this sense, is predictive: it is equivalent to an act of inference. But it embodies a necessary first stage in which one "recognizes" a typical form, as one might in the case of a portrait; without this the inference would not be possible. I will reserve the term "recognition" for the preliminary act by which we identify a mere impression as belonging by its character to a certain class. This act can occur without its customary sequel, and *does* occur, e.g., when we recognize a figure on the blackboard as a circle or a musical interval as a fifth. Here the *name* that we use, e.g., "circle," has a meaning; but it will not be urged, on that account, that the circle has a meaning. What the shape or the tone may be *like* is one thing—its resemblance to certain other forms suffices to give it a name; what it *stands for* is something else. What we bring to the datum is one thing; it is another thing where we go from there. Interpretation digresses beyond the datum; while in the act of recognition the form which is being classified can remain the final *object* of attention.

Recognizability is hardly the differentia of subject-matter, since it is a prerequisite for the apprehension of any form whatsoever.[5]

[5] "For eyes unpracticed in the discriminating perceiving of shapes and lines, one Gothic arch will look much like another; it will not be felt in its own specific individual character; its felt character for discriminating eyes will not

Percepts without concepts are blind; and while there can hardly exist such a thing in mature experience as absolute failure of recognition, since there is nothing that we can not classify under one head or another, yet a form which is at once original, complicated, and abstract will be greeted with bewilderment. But this difficulty is met simply by repeated exposure: we familiarize ourselves, say, with the style of a Mondrian as we digested long ago the abstract motives of an older art. To speak accurately, then, we can not say that the abstract motive is unfamiliar but only that it has not been rendered familiar through our experience of nature—and there lies the basis for a definition of subject-matter. A form may be entitled a "subject" if it bears a resemblance, in specific respects, to certain *natural* forms. "Form" refers to what is in the picture and "subject-matter" to a resemblance borne by this form to some aspect of the real environment. "Representations" are works containing forms which are in certain respects like the forms of nature.

There is also a negative requirement. If we could make a genuine tree, as pins are made in the factory, on the model of those which exist already, it would not be called a representation. Artistic imitation exists by defect as well as by likeness. The representation will bear a double relationship to its model—a resemblance in appearance and a deficiency of the substance.

This criterion suggests the following remarks:

(i) The criterion is not precise, for it is well known that the naturalistic grades off into the abstract. Resemblance is a matter of respects and degrees. A simple circle with a line extending beneath—is it a "flower"? The rigidly rectilinear "snake" pattern of an Indian basket—does it resemble a snake? The animal motive is "formalized," the flanks are brought into exact balance, the tail describes a regular scroll. Between the perfect oval and the human head a series of forms can be inserted; and whole styles —whole arts, one might say—flourish in this particular limbo.

(ii) The criterion is based on a circumstance extraneous to the form. It requires that a form shall (*a*) be similar to a form which (*b*) is natural. But natural forms are distinguished as a class by nothing save their connection with natural objects. The subjects of representation are as remote from one another as from various classes of abstractions; and if we had to define subject-matter on the basis of intrinsic quality, we could proceed only by enumeration. It is an accident, so to speak, that there are no real musicians who resemble Picasso's. There may today exist seemingly abstract

be expressed to the organism whose eyes do not discriminate."—D. W. Prall, from an unpublished manuscript.

forms in painting which in fact have been adapted from little known fishes or plants.

(iii) It follows that subject-matter is not an esthetic category. This point must not be misinterpreted. It is not a matter of indifference that heads and bodies should appear in painting rather than cubes and cones; and I can see no reason why the human shape, regarded purely as a shape, should be expected to affect us like a checkerboard. *What* the form may be that nature may contribute is significant; but it is immaterial that *nature* should be the source. Nature works as a purely decorative designer in the tortoise-shell, the skin of reptiles, the plumage of birds; in the honeycomb and the snowflake it develops the geometrical style. To imitate such an aspect of nature is to deal with "reality"—but the effect is formalistic, minute, and precise. A tendency to abstraction, on the other hand, in some of the Italian painters is responsible for broadly structural and expressive values. Indeed, abstract compositions are themselves objects of nature and are, accordingly, imitable. Architecture, pottery, and dress are examples of formal design, which lean upon the naturalistic not at all. Let any such object be photographed and *pouf!* it is subject-matter. What has happened? Nothing has been added, nothing has been altered. Something has been *omitted*—the physical body of the building or gown. But whatever was the esthetic quality of the original, it will be held intact in the representation. It is therefore impossible to agree with those who, confusing an accident with the essence, hold that the decorative is to the expressive as the immediate to the "real."[6] Esthetic distinctions (with a class of exceptions presently to be noted) are distinctions of quality *within* the field of the immediate.

To generalize this thesis somewhat beyond the present topic: If it had been Plato's intention to stifle the analysis as well as the production of art, he could not have adopted a better expedient than that conception of the archetype which he fixed on esthetic theory. Let me briefly examine a single application of that idea. It is believed that there exists a realistic motive in art which is the antithesis of the motive of expression through design. I will take the example of Shakespearean acting. The last speeches of the dying Hamlet can be organized, in performance, into a rhythmic

[6] "The expressive inclines to the side of meaning, the decorative to that of sense."—Dewey, *Art as Experience*, p. 124.

"Expressive form, in other words, always involves the perception of something real. . . . The 'decorative arts' proper depend wholly on such qualities as are immediately apprehended."—Barnes, *The Art in Painting*, pp. 14–16.

unity in which, with due emphasis and subordination, a range of feeling culminates and is brought to rest. *Or* they can be punctuated with stertorous gasps, heavy breathing, a death rattle, etc., gaining "conviction" of a sort but with a sacrifice in point of dramatic design. There is an example of the constructive versus the merely imitative aim. But the inferiority of the realistic version stems from the pattern of the original—the natural death, as it happens, is not designed for esthetic effect and seldom comes off very well. At bottom we have a contrast not between imitation and design but between one design and another. There is design in nature (if I am permitted the pun)—only that design is not always to our liking. Imitation reproduces, as imagination invents; and the significance of each lies in the nature of the content which it brings into art. A literally literal realism, if that could exist, would be raw and shapeless, vital or dull, according to the phase of nature which it duplicated; and if we search for the real effort of criticism beneath the label of "realism" which it attaches to this trend or that, we find that it seeks to discriminate a particular *kind* of topic or of treatment—low subjects, minute detail, intimate emotions, casual arrangement. Certainly a work is not less momentous because its issues, its forms, are also to be found in the world that surrounds it. Art perpetually discloses value and significance that had existed independently in nature but had lain unnoticed; and I make no doubt that this connection is part of the special relevance borne by certain works to our lives. But such a *correspondence* between one experience and another is not a relationship of *dependence,* and it can not begin to account for the beauty of either.

II

Our language contains a number of *sensory terms*—those which refer to elements or forms that can be given in direct experience—as well as the wider *physical* vocabulary. Examples of the first are the names of the plane figures, musical tones, colors, tastes, and smells. (This could be called the language of recognition.) Now we are said to see "ourselves" in the mirror or to have seen a "friend" in a dream or, in a picture, a "group of fighting men." Here we wish to describe a specific appearance for which no sensory name exists, and it is convenient to borrow the name of the physical object with which that appearance is associated. Clearly, the name has dropped its physicalist function and is being used as a sensory term. Physical terms so imported into the sensory language make up what we shall call the language of subject-matter.

Now appreciative criticism is subject inevitably to this limitation, that while form is individual and determinate, language is general and (in W. E. Johnson's sense) merely determinable. "In composition," wrote Emerson, "the *What* is of no importance compared with the *How*."[7] But the *How* is nothing but the determinate *What*. The language of subject-matter can not express the *How* because it touches upon only those characteristics of the form which it shares with certain whole classes of forms. A swerve in the outline, the slightest variation in the shading, of a head represents the gulf between the master and the dub, but no ready distinction of language corresponds to it. *Formalism* strives to repair this deficiency with the help of an explicitly sensory vocabulary—"line," "plane," "color," "light," and their derivatives. The formalistic analysis of painting has often demonstrated its utility. The eye is arrested in its perfunctory grasp of the familiar form and persuaded, as if by a pointer, to follow the determinate course of the design. But the language of formalism, we must observe, is itself general and determinable. The following comment—a model of elucidation—on Seurat's *Poudreuse* employs a formalistic terminology combined with references to subject-matter: "Table, plant, mirror, stylized bow are all conceived according to a succession of curves that are continued both in the color pattern of the wall behind and the form of the woman herself. The skirt is modeled by a series of curves that not only repeat the shapes of arms and shoulder-straps but complete the circular pattern of the shadows on the wall."[8] It is still necessary to look at the picture—we could not construct it from the description. Language does not communicate the determinate—"color pattern" and "curves" get us hardly closer to the actual form than "female figure," "table," and "skirt."[9] *In the presence of the picture* certain geometrical designations (as for that matter certain figurative comparisons—"flame-like," "gem-like," "serpentine," etc.) may assist our vision to grasp the unique design where an inventory of subject-matter would leave it fixed on the general type of object or situation.

When we speak of emaciated or swollen bodies, gnarled or

[7] Quoted from Emerson's *Journals* by F. O. Matthiessen, *American Renaissance.*

[8] Robert J. Goldwater, "Some Aspects of the Development of Seurat's Style," *Art Bulletin*, Vol. XXIII, p. 120.

[9] I do not raise the question whether it is *in principle* possible to communicate an esthetic content by means of language. With the help of a set of co-ordinates like the color solid one can no doubt determine an exact shade of any color. But such precision is still impossible *in practice*, that is, where we are dealing with a form of the slightest complexity.

pudgy fingers, grass, foliage, the bark of trees, we are talking about areas, colors, and lines. The countenance is pale or florid, grim or gaunt, according to the relationship of colors, the arrangement of planes. To say that Brouwer's figures are "stunted," Greco's "elongated," Tura's "contorted," Signorelli's "flayed" —these are limited but genuine expressions of esthetic value *because they designate formal character*. The terminology of formalism represents simply another selection from the sensory language, convenient perhaps for further specification. It does not represent a distinct set of esthetic attributes, to be set off as the "design" from the "material" values of subject-matter. The very same form—often, indeed, the same characteristic of the form—can be designated in either way. The movement which engages the Three Graces in the *Primavera* is a linear rhythm. It is also a "lovely gesture of concord." We are not talking about different things—we are grouping the same thing either with one class of forms or another. Undoubtedly there might be another "gesture of concord" which had little in common with this; but so are there linear rhythms which do not resemble this one. If the line were altered here, the gesture would not be the same; and if the gesture were altered, it would not be the same line.

Let us suppose there was a group of figures which served as the model for this detail. That group had its lines, its colors, its volumes, its shadows and lights. Composition, relation, pattern, proportion are *everywhere!* The significance of the act of imagination is that it brings *new* colors, new lines, new arrangements in place of the original qualities, that is, that it creates new "objects." The notion is preposterous that line, light, color, space are a set of properties peculiar to art, to be superimposed upon a formless matter supplied by nature. Yet Roger Fry could write: "The moment representation is introduced forms have an entirely new set of values. Thus a line which indicated the bend of a head in a certain direction would have far more than its mere value as line in the composition because of the attraction which a marked gesture has for the eye."[10] As if the attraction which a gesture has for the eye were conceivable apart from the *line* which it describes! As if a line could have a value "merely as line" and not as that determinate line which automatically takes membership in the class of "gestures"! Mr. Fry was no doubt thinking about the value of the gesture in isolation as against its value in the total composition; but that is a distinction of part and whole, of figure drawing and space-composition. Representation introduces an entirely new set

[10] *Vision and Design*, p. 35.

of forms. It contributes new designs. It does not intrude itself, with an effect of disturbance, into the midst of a set of abstract forms, which somehow hang on as pure line and color and shape.

I will submit two further examples of the same confusion: "As Mr. R. G. Collingwood has wittily said, a painter may be interested either in the volumes of a woman or in her femininity."[11] No painter, we may safely affirm, has ever been interested in a femininity without volumes. But there are painters who study volumes that are rather familiar to us from everyday life and there are painters who render relatively abstract, or fantastic, or stylized volumes. The volumes, in any two painters, are not alike.

"Whistler's *Mother* was called by the artist *Arrangement in Grey and Black,* but it has seldom been looked at simply as a pattern of colors."[12] But to look at the pattern of colors that Whistler painted is to see a "woman seated in a chair."

It will be observed, finally, that we do not align ourselves with those who insist that form and content are inseparable or, according to the appeal of the phrase, "inextricably intermingled," "indissolubly blended," or "indistinguishably fused." At bottom this formula represents an obscurantist protest against the comparison and analysis of different forms. "Content," according to our definition, refers to certain general or class characteristics of the form. Now it is not senseless—though it is for various reasons pretty futile—to ask whether a class of forms may not be marked as a class by a particular value, whether "nudes" are not nobler than "apples," in other words, whether the "subject" does not contribute something to the effect. This question, to be sure, is apt to be complicated by another. For many people esthetic forms are merely the pretext for the release of feelings which belong to the corresponding *objects. Any* mother or baby or sheep dog or venerable old man, any *Nativity* or *Crucifixion,* regardless of the individual treatment, elicits the stereotyped sentiment; and popular criticism, when it considers whether a *subject* is edifying or offensive, is thinking about the *thing portrayed.* Now the esthetic value of a form does not necessarily correspond to the value which its bearer enjoys in real life. There may be representations of humanity which are grander than any rendering of still life, but not because of the superior station of the former in some non-esthetic hierarchy of excellence. The painter who takes the heavenly choir or the Supreme Court for his subject does not start with the slightest advantage on that account, and we observe that religious pictures, figure studies, landscapes, interiors range all the way

[11] Samuel Alexander, *Beauty and Other Forms of Value,* p. 79.

[12] George Boas. *A Primer for Critics,* p. 62.

from supreme achievement to utter failure. Formalism is justified in seeking to eliminate this source of sentimental and didactic irrelevancy. But popular taste suffers from another limitation which is more nearly excusable. Children, horses, flowers, mountains, and waves do after all possess inherent esthetic quality, and that quality will be carried into any reproduction. But that quality is apt to be trivial, elementary, crude. An area of shadow thrown over one side of a head, a relationship between the head and the positions of the hands, may create a mightier organization than anything known to us from nature: it may absorb, it may cancel whatever value the model may have possessed in isolation. The emphasis upon subject-matter, the demand for the reproduction of "beautiful things," is therefore seen to represent a fixation upon the isolated detail and a blindness to the values of the total synthesis; an arrest at the *elementary* esthetic quality and an insensibility to great achievement; a predilection for the standardized and an incapacity to comprehend the original. Genuine issues figure here, but they are issues of formal analysis. A thousand problems of formal analysis are agitated under the heading of subject-matter versus form.

III

The depth effect, whether in nature or in painting, is measurably dependent upon habits of perception. The cube, drawn correctly on a piece of paper, can hardly be seen as another pattern on a plane with the square—it seems to have assumed a new dimension; and the conditions of this effect are not all innate. A large number in the list of elements which contribute to our sense of the bulk and location of objects in space—overlapping, perspective, distribution of light—could not function with that result apart from acquired adjustments of the optical mechanism. Meaning interpenetrates with sense to give the visual effect: it may be said that in the visual perception of space the datum is itself a function of learning. The depth phenomenon, incidentally, is not unique in this respect—the apparent color of a heavily shaded sheet of white paper, which is white when it "should" be gray, testifies equally to the influence of learning upon immediate effect.

The question we have to settle is a simple one. Suppose that we are standing on the seashore, looking out to a group of islands. Now the field is organized for us very differently from that field which might exist for a man who had just gained his vision, for the first time, by surgical means—for whom the islands might stand merely *above* the water in the vertical plane. Ours is a fuller experience of space, and it is at least in some degree our

past experience that is our advantage. But we may further be led to judge that the islands are just two miles out, and in this we may turn out to have been mistaken. Our perception will then have been proved "illusory"; but, returning to our position on the beach, we find that the visual field has not changed. When we have once come to the end of one of those stair-cases or avenues of columns which are contrived to look longer than they are, our muscular preparation will not be the same another time round: the same phenomenal distance now "means" a shorter physical stretch. The habits which condition the visual phenomenon are not affected by the revision of those later judgments, relating to traversible distance and physical size, which are *based* on the visual phenomenon. All of the last are canceled, in the case of painting, by good and sufficient knowledge; yet the effect of depth and of solidity persists. Without intending to obscure the difference in kind between the flat and the "deep" order of composition, I hold, then, that the space which matters esthetically is given and that the space which is not given does not count; or, in other words, that "volume" and "mass" are what we have called sensory terms in their application to painting.

Yet those who argue, on the strength of the depth effect, for a factor of interpretation in the appreciation of painting are thinking not of the "space" which indubitably appears in the picture but of the space which does not exist within it.[13] The meanings for which they plead are not those which, e.g., help to create perspective but those which operate normally to correct perspective in the interest of physical action upon the environment. That a surface which exists in two dimensions should manage to express a third is a paradox in their eyes, to be resolved only by an appeal to the supplementary action of the mind. But to say that we are dealing with volumes and masses when we know that there is only a plane is not a paradox but a contradiction; on the other hand it is but an axiom that a scene which only *seems* to recede does seem to recede. To utilize untouched resources of their direct experience, to duplicate upon wood or canvas the complete *appearance* of physical nature, was the task projected by those fifteenth-century masters who first achieved the conquest of naturalistic space.

We can now understand the strategy which is followed by repre-

[13] "[Subject-matter] is *never immediately experienced as a whole,* but consists in part of qualities and relations whose presence can only be *inferred* or *assumed.* This is true if only because the subject-matter of all representational painting includes three-dimensional objects whereas the pictorial surface itself is necessarily two-dimensional."—D. F. Bowers, "The Role of Subject-Matter in Art," this JOURNAL, Vol. XXXVI (1939), p. 618. My italics.

sentationalist and formalist alike, for the example of the third dimension is typical of the entire issue. Painting, they feel, so far as it is a matter of direct perception, *ought* to appear flat. So *in general* the first step is to conceive an impoverished caricature of the immediate: at the level of "sensation," we are told, there are only colors and lines and shapes. This causes us to imagine, in place of the obvious landscape or interior, a patch-work of abstractions. The formalist rests at this point, convinced of the supremacy of formal relationships—by which he secretly understands some other than the *given* scheme of relationships. Thus Birkhoff, seeking to apply his mathematical analysis to the art of painting, proposes to ignore the "connotative" factor, that is, the factor of meaning. As it turns out, what he ignores are those irregularities of the forms—by which we recognize them as "kneeling figures," "warriors," "slaves"—which refuse to fit into a purely *abstract* or geometrical analysis. The moment is ripe for someone to interpose with emphasis that we perceive not "isolated" colors and lines but the *real* objects of which they are qualities.[14] Meaning is invoked to supply what has been expelled from sense—a task which is beyond its power; for, if we saw nothing to begin with but a twisted system of planes, the mind would be impotent to assemble them into the form of a man.

Representation borrows the forms of nature without the substance, and that is everywhere the main source of confusion. For criticism seems unable to conceive a medium between real objects and abstract forms. Finding that space, body, reality are not included within the work, it does not concede the obvious—that these are not required for what the work is meant to do—because that seems to ignore the significant difference between representations and abstractions. In the face of material nature it is ready to admit the possibility of an esthetic approach: where the reality is granted, we can readily see how it might be forgotten. Art is conceded no such independence, precisely because in art the form stands alone! Hence the appeal to an *extra* faculty to account for the *negative* factor, the factor of absence—that is, the esthetically immaterial.

It may be well at this point to underscore our admission that to the extent to which a natural effect depends upon association, the representation of that effect does too. It is far from my purpose to deny, e.g., that tactile quality is apprehended through the medium of vision. In general, the claim of this paper is positive: it seeks to show how much of what we understand by the subject-matter of art can be rescued for the province of sense-perception, what an enormous range of esthetic feeling can be explained through the

[14] Cf., for instance, Dewey, *Art as Experience*, pp. 86–89.

power of form—not the "pure" pleasure of formalistic arrangement merely but the awe, the mystery, the excitement inherent in Greco's landscape or the shadows and perspectives of Chirico or the quiver and vibration of Van Gogh's form. It would be quite a different matter to urge that associations are illicit, to banish the factor of meaning from the conception of esthetic experience. I believe that almost any representation will excite at least a penumbral activity of meaning. The figures of men and women are not cut off at the edges; an arm which passes behind another body is not, for our feeling, thereby amputated. Moreover, the element of drama, which involves a sequence of incidents in time, can be condensed into the experience of painting only through a significance which attaches to the presented form. But painting *does* occasionally exploit the values of narrative and of drama; and it is only by a sacrifice of its own competence that a criterion of the esthetic can dismiss this factor as irrelevant.

Esthetic theory will now have to show how meanings, admitted as legitimate, can be reconciled with the conditions that define the esthetic experience as such. Otherwise, it must continue to fluctuate between intolerable extremes, whereby the field is either reduced to the field of *sense,* with undue restriction of its scope, or assimilated to a mode of *cognition,* with consequent impairment of the very marks which delimit the esthetic. In other words, it must establish the existence of interpretations which are not fundamentally inferential and predictive. This task has been recognized —the recognition is embodied in such expressions as "immanent reference"—but it has not been executed; and it can not be executed here. But we may say that meaning functions, in esthetic experience, so as to expand the field on which attention rests. The essential condition of the esthetic experience is that attention should *rest* on a certain content. It is by no means essential that that content be supplied by sense. The fundamental thing is the nature of the attitude that is aroused. What renders an attitude practical rather than esthetic is not the fact that it is based on past experience: it is the fact that it turns away from a given content to obtain or avoid what it does not yet possess. But in the contemplation of things which we do not see but only imagine, we definitely possess those things. Hence the *immediate* can not be identified with the *sensuous.* Through the play of meaning, a veritable universe can figure as an object of contemplation. And we reach the conception of the total imaginative experience, or the total *content* of the work, in which questions of source are transcended.

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BOOK REVIEWS

Christianity and Classical Culture: A Study of Thought and Action from Augustus to Augustine. CHARLES NORRIS COCHRANE. New York: Oxford University Press. 1944. 523 pp. $5.00.

In a time when a widespread ignorance and neglect of the values of our intellectual heritage is threatening to destroy the monuments and institutions embodying those values, the recovery of the past by historians conscious of their task is more necessary than ever. For a proper understanding of that heritage, the period of late antiquity is of particular moment, because it was during that period that the two most important elements of Western civilization were first brought together: Christianity and classical culture. Professor Cochrane has given us a new and comprehensive description of that period in a book first published in 1940 which has now been issued in a revised, American edition.

The book certainly ranks among the most important contributions made to classical studies in the last few years. Professor Cochrane gives a complete survey of the administrative, legal, and social history of the Roman Empire during the first four centuries of our era. He skillfully illustrates the political ideologies and slogans which accompanied, decorated, or covered the actual course of events. He analyzes the literary, philosophical, and religious ideas and movements as they reflected or influenced the trend of political and social developments. His work shows a full and impressive command of the literary, legal, epigraphical, and numismatic sources of the period, and makes use of many recent studies by English, American, and French scholars. The book is written in a brilliant and lively style, and it shows on every page the author's keen awareness of present-day problems, which makes the reading very attractive for the general reader. At the same time, the scholarly specialist will admire the lucid exposition of administrative and legal developments, as well as the masterful pages dedicated to such figures as Augustus, Julian, Valentinian, and Theodosius. Those pages show a firm grasp on the facts and a subtle sense for historical nuances, two qualities that are not often found together. The book also contains a number of interesting interpretations of Cicero, Plutarch, and the Roman historians, and it treats at length the theological controversies of the fourth century, and the doctrine of the Church Fathers, especially Augustine, to whom the last chapters are dedicated. Problems of a more general scope are constantly discussed with great skill, and some of the digressions lead far back into early Greek thought and poetry.

The great merits of the work are somewhat counterbalanced by a number of serious defects which are likely to make the book unsatisfactory to the scholar and dangerous for the general reader. Professor Cochrane has a love for slogans that contributes to the elegance of his presentation, but that sometimes carries him beyond the bounds of good taste, clarity, and truth. His chapter headings, like the titles of our novels and movies, have more appeal to the imagination than a specific connection with the content of the chapters. In a time when even such established terms as Platonism and Aristotelianism have become of doubtful use, the author chooses to coin Catonism, Vergilianism, Theodosianism, and the like. Still worse, the author freely applies to late antiquity a good number of contemporary terms and slogans such as humanism, idealism, materialism, and the like. This might seem to be a harmless and even elegant play with words, but Professor Cochrane, like many other recent historians, tends to treat those abstract concepts and generalizations as if they were real entities, and thus to create a kind of historical mythology which implicitly favors bias and confusion. This habit becomes particularly misleading when the modern connotations of certain slogans are subtly used to interpret and judge ancient phenomena. To give an example, when Professor Cochrane characterizes the administrative system of Constantine the Great as "Christian socialism," he is not satisfied with this dubious definition, but proceeds to conclude that from the failure of Constantine's programme "it is possible to forecast the probable outcome of analogous movements in modern times" (pp. 196 f.). No less doubtful is his attempt to associate the Greek notion of the hero with the modern concept of the superman (pp. 110 ff.). He fails to notice that the Greek idea of the hero, at least prior to Alexander the Great, had very specific religious connotations, and that such concepts as Ate, Hybris, or the envy of the gods, were far too important in early Greek thought to allow us to speak of the ideal of a "strictly human excellence."[1]

Moreover, the general thesis and conception of the book lends itself to serious objections. Professor Cochrane understands the fall of Rome as "the fall of an idea, or rather of a system of life

[1] Professor Cochrane, following the authority of Professor Maritain, even tries to trace the modern term "superman" back to Gregory the Great. He quotes Gregory as saying: qui divina sapiunt videlicet supra-homines sunt, and translates: "they are, so to speak (with apologies for the barbarism), supermen" (p. 113). There is no hyphen in Latin, and we must obviously read: supra homines sunt, and translate: "are above men." The "barbarism" of language and thought thus is not of Saint Gregory, and we must return to the correct view that "the ugly word superman" is "a product of nineteenth century pseudo-philosophy."

based upon a complex of ideas which may be described broadly as those of Classicism." Emperors, like Constantine and Theodosius, tried to come to terms with Christianity, but they sought to make it subservient to the previous political and social system. This explains their failure (pp. 355 ff.). On the other hand, it is suggested that Christian thinkers like Augustine developed a new, Christian philosophy opposed to "classicism" which was destined to be the firm foundation of the following age.

The attempt to view the entire body of ideas that may be found in classical antiquity as a unified system of "classicism" can hardly be accepted. To be sure, most classical writers and thinkers share a few very general, common premises; and a few characteristically Christian doctrines in particular, like creation, grace, or the manifestation of a divine plan in history, are consistently absent in pre-Christian antiquity. Yet this is not enough to make "classicism" a unified body of ideas. Attention should be given to the various schools of philosophy and of rhetoric, to the political and religious ideas expressed by the early Greek poets, to the ideas inherent in popular Greek and Roman religion, and to the numerous Eastern cults brought to the West during the later centuries. Professor Cochrane disregards many of these elements or makes but casual reference to them. He describes "classicism" rather vaguely as a religion of culture, as humanism, as science, and the like. Sometimes he distinguishes "classical idealism" and "classical materialism," meaning by the latter the Epicureans, and by the former mainly th Platonists. The Stoics, whom he tends to neglect, are also considered "idealists," which is rather dubious if we take the term in the only sense in which it might be properly applied to classical thinkers.

Professor Cochrane has many eloquent denunciations of the barrenness of "classicism" and especially of "classical idealism." The specific ideas singled out for criticism and almost made responsible for the fall of the Roman Empire are the distinction between fortune and virtue, and that between form and matter. These distinctions are certainly not identical, or even parts of a common "system." The distinction between fortune and virtue appears quite commonly in popular Hellenistic thought, but certainly not as the dominating idea of any philosophical system. Moreover, the concept of fortune did not always have the connotation of blind, irresponsible chance to which Professor Cochrane objects so strongly; it was connected with divine action in early Greek poetry, with natural causes in Aristotle, and with providence in the Stoics, and in this less extreme sense the concept of fortune survived through the Christian Middle Ages. On the other hand,

the distinction between form and matter is characteristic of the philosophies of Plato and Aristotle, and it has played a major rôle in the history of Western thought. I can not see how it contributed to the downfall of the Roman Empire, nor do I think it was a major issue in the final contest between Christianity and paganism. Christian thinkers always asserted the conception of *creatio ex nihilo*, and hence rejected the eternity of matter; but the distinction between form and matter as such was not rejected by Augustine or any medieval Christian thinker, nor was the existence of transcendent, incorporeal "Ideas."

No less elusive than his concept of classicism is Professor Cochrane's concept of Christianity. He does not speak of the doctrines of the New Testament or of the early apologists at all, but begins his treatment of Christian authors with the Fathers of the late second century. The consequences of this omission are serious. Only by a comparison between the New Testament and pre-Christian classical writings can the novelty of Christianity and its basic difference from pagan thought be properly illustrated. The work of the apologists, the Fathers, and the Councils can not be understood as a complete destruction of classical thought, as Professor Cochrane seems to suggest; it is rather a gradual elaboration and systematization of the original Christian doctrine, in which classical methods, terms, and ideas play an increasingly significant rôle. The process was one of selection, and whereas all those ideas were discarded which seemed to be incompatible with the fundamental teachings of Christianity, many others were thought to be compatible and freely assimilated. To present the Church Fathers and Councils as the representatives of a totally new Christian thought, almost uninfluenced by classical thought and entirely opposed to it, is really a distortion of perspective. To maintain this view, Professor Cochrane is constantly forced to disregard or to minimize the classical elements in the Church Fathers. He fails to see that the trinitarian formula of Nicea, at least in its scheme and terminology, was influenced by the Greek philosophical tradition. His presentation of Augustine is particularly amazing in that respect. Augustine's debt to classical thought and literature is treated most casually. Several ideas are credited to Augustine which actually are derived from classical thinkers. On the other hand, Professor Cochrane engages in a lengthy diatribe against Platonism to which Augustine himself would hardly subscribe. The extensive analysis of Augustine, in spite of its many brilliant passages, thus remains unsatisfactory because the lines between the Christian, classical, and original elements in Augustine are not clearly drawn.

As to the relation between "classical idealism" and the fall of the Roman Empire, Christianity and the medieval world, Professor Cochrane's thesis is as fallacious as it is suggestive. Actually the Roman Empire lasted for almost five hundred years in the West after Augustus, which is a considerable period, and in the East it persisted for another thousand years. Thus it still remains to be explained why "classicism" had less disastrous consequences in the East than in the West, in spite of the fact that the philosophical ideas of antiquity all originated in the East and were transferred to the West in a rather belated and superficial manner. On the other hand, although the lasting contributions of Augustine to Western thought are obvious, I can not see that his thought laid the foundation for any *political* organization that has equalled or surpassed the Roman Empire in historical vitality. All these difficulties vanish as soon as we stop conceiving the relation between thought and action in an oversimplified manner, and are ready to admit that social and intellectual developments, although interrelated in many ways, also follow their independent courses.

The underlying reason for all these controversial points is apparently the stand Professor Cochrane takes on the philosophical, political, and social issues of the present day. He seems to endorse a Christian point of view opposed to the principles implied in modern natural and social science. Instead of arguing his point in a philosophical or ideological treatise, he has written a book on ancient history in which the present-day contrast between Christianity and modern science, as he sees it, is read into the contrast between Christianity and ancient philosophy. If the author had stated his position more directly, we might argue against it along the lines of contemporary thought. If we follow his own method of historical polemic, we might merely say that Augustine never rejected the ancient concept of truth as such (as the author asserts on pp. 506 f.), but merely added Christian truth to what was really true in classical thought, which included much more than Professor Cochrane would have us believe.

As a book of historical scholarship, Professor Cochrane's book ranks very high indeed in all those sections in which he gives a factual account of political developments or analyzes the content of specific texts. The remaining sections, dealing with a general discussion and criticism of philosophical and theological ideas, is always stimulating and provocative, but vitiated by his preconceptions, and hence to be read with caution. In view of the excellent qualities of the work, it is to be regretted that the author has not withstood more successfully the temptation to exaggerate the contrast between Christianity and classical thought and to

play up the former against the latter. The contribution of both elements to Western civilization has been of equal importance, and both heritages are again badly needed if we want to overcome the confusion of ideas and of values that has been threatening our physical and spiritual existence.

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Tipos históricos del filosofar físico. JUAN DAVID GARCÍA BACCA. (Universidad de Tucumán, Facultad de Filosofía y Letras, III.) Tucumán: Universidad Nacional de Tucumán. 1941. 368 pp.

Invitación a filosofar. (Vol. II—*El conocimiento filosófico.*) JUAN DAVID GARCÍA BACCA. México: El Colegio de México. 1942. ix + 236 pp.

El poema de Parménides. (*Atentado de hermenéutica histórico-vital.*) JUAN DAVID GARCÍA BACCA. (Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, Centro de Estudios Filosóficos de la Facultad de Filosofía y Letras.) México: Imprenta Universitaria. 1943. xv + 234 pp.

Sobre estética griega. JUAN DAVID GARCÍA BACCA. (Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, Instituto de Investigaciones Estéticas.) México: Imprenta Universitaria. 1943. vi + 62 pp.

The above works by Professor García Bacca give ample evidence of his productivity since his exile from Spain, and point clearly to his intellectual formation. The author, at present Professor of Philosophy and Classical Philology at the National University of Mexico, studied higher mathematics and advanced physics, philosophical Greek and classical philology, at various universities in Germany, Belgium, and France. Given this linguistic background, it is no surprise at all that he uses a philological approach to philosophical problems.

García Bacca, like St. Augustine, is an interesting example of a convert-type of thinker. But, unlike the ancient Roman who found salvation in God, this new convert subtly confesses to having found, "at the age of 34," salvation away from God and in himself. Before his conversion to romantic subjectivism, García Bacca was an old-fashioned Thomist, and his first two publications, written in Latin during the time he was studying for the priesthood in Spain, are about first principles according to St. Thomas. The Cartesian "I think" is the modern root of his present frame of mind, and Kant seems to be the "daemon" who awakened him from the dogmatic slumbers of his priestly days.

Conversion leads the author to the conclusion that there are two basic types of philosophical thinking, whose terminology is borrowed from Nietzsche: the "Apollinian" or "impersonal" and the "Dionysian" or "historico-vital." Philosophy in the first style, like a system of mathematics or logic, is neat but dead: it is too true to be good; philosophy in the second style is diabolical but alive: it is too good to be true. In short, the new García Bacca almost defies his old Thomist God and dares to present, so to speak, a Promethean challenge to philosophy itself. Would that we could witness a dialogue in limbo between the two contrasting converts, St. Augustine and García Bacca!

The first volume, "Historical Types of Philosophizing on Physics," contains a carefully documented study of the Hellenic or "immediate origins" of this discipline and its evolution from Hesiod to Kant, with special emphasis on two of its most important categories, space and time. A subsequent work plans to trace the beginnings of physical science back to primitive mentality.

According to Professor García Bacca, the history of physics unfolds two fundamental types of theory about nature: (1) the "contemplative physics" of the Greek and medieval period, and (2) the "mathematical physics" of the classical and modern period. The former type is based on the visualist psychology of the "eyes"; the latter, on the experimental technique of the "hands."

Some hard-boiled readers may object that the foregoing account is too neat and sweeping a generalization to be historically exact, but the two differentiating metaphors of "eyes" and "hands" seem to describe aptly the difference between the empirical method of an Aristotle and the mathematical one of a Galileo. Moreover, to paraphrase Tennyson, more things are wrought by *metaphors* than this world dreams of. In fact, the radical change from the physics of "eyes" to that of "hands" would have been more convincingly elucidated, if not explained, had the author connected it with the socio-economic change from a pre-industrial to an industrial era. Hands and *manu*-facturing work together.

Volume II of "Invitation to Philosophizing" is a sequel to the preceding book and employs the same kind of "historico-vital interpretation." It analyzes through a *"preludio filológico-filosófico"* three Hellenic models of science: the Platonic, the Aristotelian, and the Euclidean. Whereas the emphasis in the earlier publication is on the "intuitive" character of Greek science as a whole, the accent here is on its differences in the three models.

Professor García Bacca states that the famous Greek trio start alike, but finish with a difference. Each of them begins with the experiential "confusion" of things, which corresponds to the

mythological chaos in Hesiod. Each one has practically the same scientific method, whose aim is to get order out of the original disorder, and which is described respectively as "division" (Plato), "definition" (Aristotle), and "delimitation" (Euclid). However, Plato ends up with the "atomistic" intuition that science is a "discovery" of "ideas-in-themselves"; Aristotle, with the "naturalistic" intuition that science is a "discovery" of "ideas-of-matter"; and Euclid, with the "mathematical" intuition that science is a "construction" of "one of the" possible determinates of an essentially indeterminate field. The "constructive" or manipulative character of Euclid's geometry brings him intellectually, if not spiritually, close to Kant, and therefore to the modern physics of "hands." The author displays these three models of Greek science with logical and philological finesse.

In "The Poem of Parmenides," we find Professor García Bacca's Spanish translation of this classic Greek poem along with his detailed commentaries. The translation adopts a mixed form of verse and prose, and is divided into three parts: the Prologue, the Ontological Poem, and the Phenomenological Poem.

The following passage on page 65 expresses concisely the general trend of the author's interpretation of the text: "And—jumping many centuries, because history has already done so for us—I should say that the Poem of Parmenides is an attempt, the first one, at Hegel's *Logik*. I shall expound, or at least attempt to, the hermeneutics of the ontological Poem from the standpoint of Hegel." This "hermeneutics" is doubtless open to the criticism of committing the opposite of the genetic fallacy, by deriving the meaning of what came before from what came after.

"On Greek Esthetics" turns out to be really a critical appreciation and a philologico-philosophical review of a volume called *"La critica en la edad ateniense"* (Criticism in the Athenian Age) by the Mexican literary critic, Alfonso Reyes. García Bacca here accepts the latter's basic statement that "Greek culture is based on the *logos,"* and applies it to the history of Greek esthetics from its Homeric origins to Aristotle's *Poetics*. Of course, some Greek scholars, like Rodolfo Mondolfo, will charge that this traditional conception of the ancient Greek as having an "instinctive horror" for the indefinite is too simple a view of the complex structure of Greek life.

This little volume is filled with observations worthy of note. For example, Plato, who is described as "the poet against poetry," put poetry to death in order to save the universe, not in order to save us poor mortals, as Reyes wrongly interprets the Platonic idea of "imitation." Aristotle's doctrine that tragedy, which

reveals a "tragic *logos*," is the literary *genre par excellence*, is connected with the Greek's experience as a citizen in the *Polis*. The author also remarks that the Greeks lacked a Kant who insinuated that, not only are there "classical beauties" independent of the "four causes," but also new types of beauty free of the "*a priori* forms" of the understanding. "A modern Poetics is only possible after assimilating well the Kantian *Critique of Judgment*" (p. 51). And scandalous as it may sound to anti-modernists, the mathematically-minded García Bacca praises the "surrealists," with their novel experiments in "pure spaces," for putting the Kantian theory of beauty into practice. How would the sedate philosopher from Koenigsberg react to all this?

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BOOK NOTES

The Tractatus de Successivis *Attributed to William Ockham.* Edited by PHILOTHEUS BOEHNER. (Franciscan Institute Publications, No. 1.) St. Bonaventure, N. Y.: The Franciscan Institute, St. Bonaventure College. 1944. xi + 122 pp. $2.00.

In his unceasing attack on fictitious entities, William of Ockham returned again and again to the task of applying his razor to the so-called "successive realities" espoused by the Scotists of his time. Is motion something over and above the things that are moved? Is place something over and above the physical environment of the located body? Is time an entity distinct from the things which endure and change? To all these questions Ockham gave an emphatic denial, supported by an arsenal of arguments presented in his incisive style.

The so-called "Tractatus de Successivis," here edited for the first time by Father Boehner, is a compilation of chapters found in Ockham's authentic works, though it is doubtful that Ockham himself made this compilation. Apparently the original source of the treatises is Ockham's *Expositio super libris Physicorum*, for although they likewise appear in the printed editions and in some manuscripts of the *Summulae in libros Physicorum*, their presence in this latter work appears due to copyists or editors.

Father Boehner's edition is based primarily on the texts of *Ms. Basel Stadtbibliothek F. II. 24* and of *Cod. Vat. Ottob. lat. 176*, supplemented by *Cod. Amplon. 0 76* and *Ms. Bibl. Nat. 16130*, these four being the only complete manuscript texts of the *Tractatus* so far identified. Use is also made of two manuscripts of Ock-

ham's *Expositio super libris Physicorum,* namely *Cod. Vat. lat. 3062* and *Ms. Merton Coll. 293.* All of these manuscript sources are of fourteenth-century origin.

While detailed appraisal of Father Boehner's text can not be made without reference to the manuscripts, his readings appear to preserve the sense and character of Ockham's thought, and to exhibit conscientious and faithful scholarship. Even though the *Tractatus* is only a compilation from Ockham's authentic works, it should be warmly welcomed by students of fourteenth-century philosophy as a valuable addition to our very inadequate library of modern editions of Ockham's writings.

E. A. M.

Naturaleza y vida. ALFRED NORTH WHITEHEAD. (Estudio Preliminar, Traducción y Notas de Risieri Frondizi.) Buenos Aires: Instituto de Filosofía, Universidad de Buenos Aires. 1941. 88 pp. $2 m/arg.

After having carefully translated for the first time in Spanish Berkeley's classic work, *Tratado sobre los principios del conocimiento humano* (Buenos Aires, Editorial Losada, 1939), Risieri Frondizi, Professor of Philosophy at the University of Tucumán, continues his highly commendable work as translator by publishing a Spanish version of Whitehead's *Nature and Life.* This is the first work of the author to be put into Spanish.

The translator studied under Whitehead at Harvard in 1934–1935, and offers his painstaking work both as a personal tribute to his teacher's influence on his "philosophical formation," as well as a contribution "to the knowledge of contemporary English philosophy unjustly neglected by Spanish-speaking peoples." He considers this book "the best introduction to Whitehead's philosophy," and is fully aware that the author is one of those philosophers, as one critic expressed it, "more admired than read." Readers who have struggled with the Whiteheadian terminology will readily appreciate the extremely difficult task of the translator.

Professor Frondizi prefaces his translation with a "preliminary study" of the fundamental concepts of the Whiteheadian metaphysics. The "organicist" philosophy, he believes, is really more Aristotelian than Platonic, in spite of appearances to the contrary. For reality conceived as the "actual entities" of the world is closer to the Aristotelian "unity of matter and form" than to the Platonic "existence of ideas in a super-empirical world." Critics are therefore mistaken in identifying Whitehead's "eternal objects" with "Platonic ideas."

This type of comparative analysis, presented so clearly and succinctly by Frondizi, is doubtless subject to a triangular polemic—Plato, Aristotle, Whitehead—each one against the other two, and will probably remain an eternal object of controversy.

P. R.

NOTES AND NEWS

The First Annual Meeting of the American Society for Aesthetics was held at the Cleveland Museum of Art, Cleveland, Ohio, September 11–13, 1944. The papers will be published in Volume I of the *Proceedings* of the Society. The program follows:

Monday Morning Session

Aims and Methods in Aesthetics

A Proposed Method for the Scientific Study of Aesthetics. *L. D. Longman*
The Toolbox of Aesthetics ..... *Carl Thurston*
The Methods of Aesthetics ..... *J. R. Tuttle*
Towards a New Bibliography ..... *E. C. Hassold*
The Rôle of the Arts in Reconstruction ..... *L. K. Frank*

Monday Afternoon Session

General Theory

An Hypothesis about Emotional Distance in Art .... *S. C. Pepper*
The Aesthetics of Alfred Rosenberg ..... *A. R. Chandler*
The World as Spectacle: An Aesthetic View of Philosophy. *G. E. Mueller*
The Sublime, and other Subordinate Aesthetic Concepts. *J. S. Moore*
Art as Memory, Activity, and Goal ..... *W. S. Rusk*

Tuesday Morning Session

The Arts: Music, Literature

Music in Industry ..... *W. H. Hollis*
Spatial Imagery in Some Recent Poetry ..... *Katharine E. Gilbert*
On the Validity of Literary History and its Essence. *Renato Poggioli*
Positive and Negative Romanticism ..... *C. D. Thorpe*

Nationalism, Internationalism, and Universality in Literature. *J. Remenyi*
The Structure of Art ..... *M. C. Nahm*

TUESDAY AFTERNOON SESSION

The Visual Arts

Problems of Descriptive Analysis in the Visual Arts. *Helmut Hungerland*
The Cyclical Theory in Art History ..... *F. J. Roos, Jr.*
Subject in Art ..... *C. D. Lamberton*
Different Responses Produced by Good and Poor Art. *Catharine Patrick*
Industrial Progress and Aesthetic Enjoyment ... *Maximilian Beck*

TUESDAY EVENING

Annual Dinner. Presidential Address: Society and Solitude in Aesthetics ..... *Thomas Munro*

WEDNESDAY MORNING SESSION

The Arts: Various Approaches

Charting Interrelations of the Arts ..... *R. E. L. Rainey, Jr.*
The Surrealist Sensibility ..... *Isabel C. Hungerland*
Beauty as Balance of Unity and Variety ..... *Charles Hartshorne*
A Method for the Creation of Geometric Designs Based on Structure (lantern slides) ..... *E. M. Blake*
The Foundation of Art Education (lantern slides). *H. Schaefer-Simmern*
The Aesthetics of the Motion Picture (lantern slides) .. *R. S. Stites*

An International Congress of Philosophy, organized by the Société Haitienne d'Etudes Scientifiques, was held September 24–30, 1944, at Port-au-Prince, Haiti. The general subject of the conference was "Les Problèmes de la Connaissance." Professor Jacques Maritain was the guest of honor and delivered the address at the opening meeeting. In spite of war conditions, representatives from France, England, Canada, United States, Cuba, Mexico, Brazil, Peru, and a number of other South American republics were present. Further news about the Congress will appear later, written by Professor Cornelius Krusé, who attended.

The American Philosophical Association, Eastern Division, plans to meet at Hunter College, New York City, from Thursday afternoon to Saturday afternoon, February 22–24, 1945.

The program will include the Carus Lectures by Professor Morris R. Cohen, one of which will be delivered on each of three afternoons at five o'clock. There will be an informal discussion at the Smoker, Thursday evening, led by the Committee on the Function of Philosophy in Liberal Education. Also, Professor Cornelius Krusé has accepted an invitation to address the Division on "Comparison between Present Day Tendencies in North and South American Philosophy."

Two other plenary sessions with invited speakers will be devoted, respectively, to "Metaphysics: Its Function, Consequences, and Criteria" and "The Distinctive Contribution of Philosophy to the Issues of War and Peace."

Two further periods will be set aside for unsolicited papers contributed by members on any philosophical problems in which they are interest, although the Program Committee has designated that one of these sessions should be devoted to the subject: "Philosophy and the Arts." These papers should be sent to the Secretary as early as possible. The reading time of such papers should not exceed twenty minutes.

The complete program including information as to arrangements for the accommodation of those attending the meeting will be issued not later than February 1.

HOWARD B. JEFFERSON, *Secretary*

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